

**Statement of
UIL Holdings Corporation
To
Appropriations, Human Services and Technology Committees
On
2012/2013 ALLOCATION PLAN
FOR THE
LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
BLOCK GRANT**

Legislative Office Building

October 1, 2012

Laura Gonzalez, Director of Collections at The United Illuminating Company (UI) and James McNally, Director of Customer Services at Southern Connecticut Gas (SCG) and Connecticut Natural Gas (CNG) submit these comments on behalf of UIL Holdings Corporation (UIL) in support of the 2012/2013 Allocation Plan for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Block Grant.

UIL supports the 2012/2013 Allocation Plan as submitted. This year's Plan appropriately allocates a basic benefit to both deliverable fuel and utility households. This will help low income customers who heat with electricity or gas reduce outstanding balances that will accumulate through the winter moratorium and protect their service from disconnection for a twelve month period. Although the winter moratorium begins on November 1st and ends on May 1st, customers who are enrolled in the program will be placed on a twelve month budget plan by the Company. We are also pleased to see that the award levels for the upcoming moratorium season were increased to historic levels (I don't have a lot of the past history but since 2007 the

levels had been higher--\$880 being the highest award). Customer participation declined during the prior year due to the initially reduced utility benefit. Customers will be more inclined to seek assistance through the Community Action Agencies during the 2012-2013 Moratorium season because of the increased benefit levels. This is extremely important since customers will only receive a matching payment from the utilities *if* they apply and receive an Energy Assistance (EA) payment. Customers have the opportunity to reduce their outstanding balances by the EA award *and* by utility matches on that award plus any payments made on that account by the customer or on a customer's behalf. This is a dollar for dollar utility match, up to a zero balance, if customers comply with the program guidelines and their monthly budget payments.

In conclusion, the Company endorses the 2012 – 2013 Allocation Plan as submitted and appreciates the support of the Office of Policy and Management, Department of Social Services, and this legislature for supporting this Allocation Plan.

If you have any additional questions please contact UIL's Government Relations -- Carlos M. Vazquez at (203) 521-2455 or Al Carbone at (203) 671-4421.